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ABSTRACT

This guide on using the newspaper is designed for secondary students in gifted education programs. Activities included in the guide can be used with a full range of subject areas, as students actually use the newspaper as the learning resource. The 50 activities are organized around the sections of the newspaper (general, news, editorials, advertisements, entertainment, comics, and specials). Each activity is written directly to the student, allowing for independent and self-directed completion of activities by individual students. The activities are qualitatively different from the regular curriculum in terms of content, process, product, and learning environment. Sample activities deal with predicting lifestyle effects if newspapers disappeared, analyzing comic strips as reflections of culture, and designing a newspaper advertisement for a new product or service. A scope and sequence chart for the activities and their objectives is included, as well as a list of higher level thinking skills used in newspaper study. (JDD)

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Using the Newspaper with Gifted Students

by

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The University of Kansas

EC232094

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Contents

Introduction 3

Gifted Students and Programs 3

Criteria for Developing Materials 4

Activity Comments/Suggestions 5

Scope and Sequence of Program Objectives and Activities 6

Activities

- General 8
- News 15
- Editorials 23
- Advertisements 30
- Entertainment 38
- Comics 44
- Specials 51

Appendices

A. Newspapers in Education and Higher Levels of Thinking 58

B. Student Contract Form 59

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Introduction

Newspaper in Education (NIE) programs have experienced a continuous pattern of growth since their inception in the 1950s. At present, over 700 newspapers have developed programs that involve a wide variety of educational activities, including preservice and inservice presentations, graduate courses, and the development and dissemination of teaching material.

Once viewed as a resource primarily useful for teaching current events, NIE programs have expanded to include teaching material for all grade levels and subject areas. Reflective of general educational trends in curriculum, NIE material continues to be developed in a wide variety of emerging content areas. For example, NIE material has been developed in law-related education, global education, drug-abuse education and survival skills education. NIE material also has been developed for low-achieving students, including those with learning disabilities. Only recently has the scope of NIE been expanded to include activities designed specifically for gifted and talented students.

The materials in this publication are designed for secondary students (middle and high school levels) in gifted education programs who have mastered the fundamentals or basics of the regular school curriculum and need more advanced kinds of educational stimulation. However, while designed for use with gifted students, the authors believe that many of the activities could be used successfully with a wide range of high achieving students in regular classrooms. The activities included here provide experiences in content and skills that are not normally considered part of the regular school program and in fact, are qualitatively different from the basic curriculum provided for all students.

Gifted Students and Programs

A qualitatively different curriculum is considered to be necessary for students who are defined as gifted, talented and/or creative. Gifted students can be defined or differentiated from other students because they excel or demonstrate the potential to excel in one or more of the areas defined by the U.S. Office of Education as characteristic of being gifted or talented (approximately 3-5 percent of the school age population).

Specifically, gifted or talented students:

1. Have general intellectual ability or advanced general aptitude.
2. Have specific academic aptitudes.
3. Have the ability to think creatively—that is, they show divergent thinking that results in unconventional tasks, products and behavior.
4. Have leadership abilities.
5. Have visual or performing arts ability.

It is difficult to determine exactly what comprises a qualitatively different NIE activity. NIE programs differ greatly from school to school; thus, it is impossible to detail the standard or conventional activities that are generally characteristic of newspapers in education.

Qualitatively different NIE activities, however, would be those activities that are specifically designed to enhance or adjust to the special characteristics of gifted students. Renzulli* defines qualitative differences as experiences that (1) are above and beyond the regular curriculum; (2) take into account the students' content interests; (3) provide for preferred styles of learning; and (4) allow students opportunities to pursue topic areas using advanced methods of inquiry.

Maker** synthesized the various definitions of qualitatively different learning into four categories. The learning experiences would (1) build upon the unique characteristics of gifted students; (2) involve concepts at higher levels of abstraction and complexity; (3) emphasize the development of higher levels of thinking; and (4) provide environments that facilitate the development of student potential.

It is not the purpose of this publication to detail the scope of models and strategies associated with teaching gifted students. However, it is important that all activities be valid and educationally sound, given the goals and purposes of both NIE and gifted education.

When designing qualitatively different NIE activities for gifted students, initial consideration must be given to the four areas of content, process, product and environment. Specifically, how can the four areas provide a focus for the development of relevant NIE activities?

The newspaper is an excellent resource for the development of curriculum because it is readily available, current in its focus and usable with complex, abstract, varied and economically organized activities. Such characteristics of curriculum are the ones described by Maker as appropriate content modifications for gifted students.

The newspaper provides content as well that is related to the study of people. This is an additional area of content that Maker suggests as appropriate for gifted students. Such a focus provides gifted students with an awareness of individuals from diverse backgrounds,

*Renzulli, Joseph S. *The Enrichment Triad Model: A Guide for Developing Defensible Programs for Gifted and Talented.* Creative Learning Press, Wethersfield, Conn., 1977.

**Maker, June S. *Curriculum Development for Gifted.* Aspen Systems, Maryland, 1982.

with different characteristics, and who are involved in a variety of events. Gifted students can study an individual in depth or study groups of individuals as they interact in the human arena.

The newspaper also provides an avenue for the inclusion of both a study of substantive information and methods of inquiry. Such curricular modifications are additional suggestions for educational practitioners planning instruction for gifted students.

The second area of curriculum development for gifted students is in the area of process modification. Processes are methodologies used by educators to teach and determine how material is presented, what questions are asked and what mental and physical expectations are required. To make processes more appropriate for gifted students, the teacher structures mental activities that are more demanding and will require a higher level of response. Students are forced to process material at more abstract and complex levels and may be required to express the reasoning process used to arrive at specific answers.

The most frequent process modification moves the level of thought from the lower levels of thinking, such as memory or recall, to the higher levels of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Teaching activities and questions are the major vehicles for setting the expectations for higher level thinking processes.

Classification systems assist the teacher in the planning of activities and questions. Perhaps the most well known is the Taxonomy of Education Objectives proposed by Bloom and others.* The taxonomy provides a set of criteria that can be used to classify educational objectives and related activities according to level of complexity of thinking required. In addition, the taxonomy is generic and thus can be used for all academic areas and levels of instruction. Given its hierarchical structure, simplicity, applicability and widespread acceptance among educators, the higher levels of the taxonomy have provided the primary focus for the development of the activities for this publication.

Appendix A includes a listing of student behaviors for taxonomy levels beyond knowledge and comprehension. Also included is a listing of skills normally associated with critical thinking. The skills are not listed in any specific order or hierarchy.

The third area of curriculum suggested by Maker as needing modification for gifted students is the nature of the products of the learning process. Products can be of many types but should, when possible, address real problems or concerns, be a synthesis rather than a summary of information, and whenever possible be evaluated by someone other than the teacher.

The activities in this publication require that the students use the newspaper as the learning resource. Most of the activities require that the students demonstrate what they have learned (product) through newspaper-type applications (editorials, news articles, cartoons, etc.).

The fourth area of differentiation relates to the learning environment. The most appropriate environment for gifted students is one that includes real-life examples. Thus, the student can be involved not only with the resources of the school environment, but the greater world as well. The contemporary nature of the newspaper makes it especially useful in developing activities that take the student beyond the parameters of the textbook.

*Bloom, Benjamin S. *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals: Handbook I: Cognitive Domain.* Longman, Green and Company, New York, 1956.

Criteria for Developing Materials

Although stated earlier in a different form, the following criteria should be considered when developing NIE material for gifted and high achieving students. The criteria do not necessarily reflect any one particular model for teaching gifted students but represent, in essence, what the authors believe are important guidelines for the education of the gifted through the use of the newspaper as the learning resource. Throughout the writing of *Using the Newspaper with Gifted Students*, the authors have been guided by the belief that being able to read and use the newspaper, while important for all students, is absolutely essential for the gifted students who will likely become our nation's leaders and academicians.

Specifically, the design of NIE activities (material) for gifted students should consider the following criteria or guidelines:

1. The activities (learning experiences) should be qualitatively different from what would normally be expected from all or most students. They should not be "more of the same" that would focus simply on acceleration.
2. The activities should provide for exploration, enrichment and the in-depth study of areas of interest to students.
3. The activities should focus on higher levels of thinking including problem-solving, inquiry, creativity, critical and divergent thinking.
4. The activities should be used in a manner that will encourage self-directed and independent learning. They should foster individualized and personalized learning experiences.
5. The activities should be as open-ended as possible and should not be designed around predetermined answers.
6. The activities should provide learning opportunities which are related to "real" problems and issues.

7. The content focus of the activities should be broad-based and integrative rather than centered on single-subject areas.
8. The activities should provide for the study of people and should encourage the clarification of student values and beliefs.

The above guidelines, which reflect the views of educators of the gifted, clearly indicate the value of using the newspaper as a teaching resource.

Activity Comments/Suggestions for Implementation

To conclude the overview of the program, a number of activity comments and suggestions for implementation are presented.

1. The activities were specifically designed or adapted for use with gifted students, but they should also be of value for high achieving students in regular classrooms.
2. The activities involve a wide range of skills and abilities. No one activity will achieve, or relate to, all dimensions of gifted education.
3. Most activities have a generic content focus; that is, they are designed to be used with a full range of subject areas.
4. The activities were not developed as a total NIE program. Although collectively they provide a comprehensive set of learning experiences, it is assumed that no one student will necessarily complete all activities.
5. The activities were developed so that they can be used with any newspaper.
6. The activities are designed so that students will actually use the newspaper as the learning resource.
7. The activities are organized around the sections of the newspaper. This organization was selected because the newspaper is, by its very nature, non-graded and interdisciplinary. The organization also will allow students to gain a greater understanding of the total newspaper.
8. Each activity is written directly to the student. This allows for independent and self-directed completion of activities by individual students.
9. Each activity sheet is self-contained and is ready to be reproduced for distribution to students.
10. A scope and sequence chart of the sections and related objectives and activities is included on page 6 . The form gives a quick overview of the organization of the program.
11. Students should be encouraged to modify or expand any of the activities. They may develop their own newspaper activities. To help monitor the changes, a simple student contract form is included in Appendix B.
12. It is assumed that students will complete each activity by using their own newspapers. Some activities require access to past editions. The complexity of the activities does not permit the activity sheets to function as worksheets.

Scope and Sequence of Program Objectives and Activities

Focus	Activity Title	Objective
General	**Newspaper Reading Habits**	To generalize about our newspaper reading habits and interests
	Newspaper Hypotheses	To formulate hypotheses about life in our society
	Life Without Newspapers	To predict the effects on our way of life if newspapers disappeared
	Headline Values	To write brief, clear statements about values that are important to us
	Living Bill of Rights	To analyze how the Bill of Rights affects our lives
	Time Capsule	To form a synthesis of the items that are representative of our contemporary culture
	Newspaper Evaluation	To evaluate the quality of your community newspaper
News	**Newsworthy**	To distinguish the news value of certain events
	Today's News	To analyze the historical significance of today's news
	Coverage	To compare and contrast the news coverage of certain events
	Clarifying Concerns	To clarify individual values and concerns from the newspaper
	Society's Problems	To develop a solution for a current societal problem
	Conflict Resolution	To analyze types of conflict reported in the newspaper
	Cultural Awareness	To infer cultural differences from the newspaper
	2050	To predict events that may appear in future newspapers
Editorials	**Voice of the People**	To determine the writing styles of effective letters to the editor
	Liberal and Conservative	To analyze newspaper columnists for their liberal or conservative viewpoints
	Editorial Values	To classify values expressed in the editorial pages
	Dear Editor	To analyze issues and problems of concern to citizens
	Cartooning	To design an editorial cartoon on an issue of interest
	Effective Cartoons	To evaluate editorial cartoons in terms of purpose and effectiveness
	Cartoon News Tag	To design editorial cartoons on current news events or issues
Advertisements	**Analyzing Ads**	To analyze the basics of advertising and advertising appeals to consumers
	Evaluating Ads	To evaluate the quality of newspaper advertisements
	Cultural Artifacts	To make inferences about our society from cultural artifacts
	Persuasion	To analyze the use of techniques of persuasion in newspaper advertisements
	New, Old and Future Products	To contrast new and old products and services and predict future products and services
	My Product or Service	To design a newspaper ad for a newly created product or service
	Interdependence	To analyze the interdependent nature of our society
	Luxuries/Necessities	To analyze our life styles and the goods and services we consume
Entertainment	**Entertainment Values**	To examine forms of entertainment valued by people in our society
	Entertainment Changes	To evaluate the changes in entertainment that have taken place in our society
	Culture Clues	To evaluate the forms of culture in our communities
	Critic	To criticize one or more specific forms of entertainment
	Role of Sports	To evaluate the role that sports play in our lives
	Hobbies/Recreation/Travel	To generalize about the hobbies, recreation and travel activities of citizens
Comics	**Cultural Reflections**	To analyze comic strips as reflections of culture
	Alike and Different	To compare and contrast comic strip similarities and differences
	Scrambled	To design a new comic strip from existing comic strip characters, settings and stories
	Characters	To clarify the traits of comic strip characters
	Comic Changes	To analyze past, present and future changes in newspaper comic strips
	Aliens	To develop hypotheses about life on planet earth
	Popularity Profile	To analyze the popularity of newspaper comic strips
Specials	**Picture That**	To create a story from different newspaper photos
	Asking for Advice	To analyze the purpose, questions and answers of advice columnists
	Our Society	To develop generalizations about society
	Expert	To apply expertise to a particular topic
	Feature That	To interpret the significance of feature stories
	Business Changes	To compare and contrast past and present business sections and predict future changes
	That's Business	To analyze the significance of newspaper business sections

Activities

Newspaper Reading Habits

Name: _____

Focus: General

Objective: *To generalize about our newspaper reading habits and interests.*

Activity: *Reading and using the newspaper is considered absolutely essential to effective citizenship. The newspaper informs, entertains and offers us interpretations of important issues each and every day of the year. It is our uncensored "window to the world."*

1. For this activity you are going to conduct a survey of the newspaper reading habits of at least 10 adults in your community.
2. Consider the kinds and types of questions you will ask to determine the reading habits of the adults you will survey. (What information will be most useful?) Show your questions to your teacher before you begin the survey.
3. After completing the survey, prepare a table to illustrate the results. Write a news story describing what you have discovered.
4. Compare your survey results with other students. List (generalize) what you have concluded about newspaper reading habits and interests.

Newspaper Hypotheses

Name: _____

Focus: General

Objective: *To formulate hypotheses about life in our society.*

Activity: *It has been said that the newspaper is a "mirror reflection" of our society. The newspaper provides us with a snapshot or one-day picture of life in our society.*

1. Visualize a situation in which no history was recorded for 200 years (1980s-2180s). No one in the 2180s knows much about our contemporary society. The only written record available is one copy of a daily newspaper that has been buried in a time capsule.
2. Examine your copy of the newspaper. What hypotheses about society in the 1980s might you generate from the newspaper?
3. Discuss your hypotheses with other students. After the discussion what changes in your hypotheses would you make?

Life Without Newspapers

Name: _____

Focus: General

Objective: *To predict effects on our way of life if newspapers disappeared.*

Activity: *Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the First Amendment to our Constitution. We have come to rely on the newspaper for its objective reporting of the issues and events that affect our lives. The newspaper is free of government control and censorship.*

1. Imagine that newspapers are no longer available.
2. List as many changes in our lives as possible resulting from the disappearance of newspapers. (It is important to consider the role that newspapers play in our lives.)
3. Using the above list, predict what is likely to happen to our society if newspapers are no longer available to report current events and interpret their significance to our way of life.
4. As an alternative activity, assume that our newspapers are controlled by the government. Examine one issue of your newspaper and circle any articles and editorials that criticize any activities or actions of local, state and national government.

Headline Values

Name: _____

Focus: General

Objective: *To write brief, clear statements about values that are important to us.*

Activity: *A headline gives us a brief summary of what an article is about; it capsulizes the main idea of a story. Too often, newspapers are criticized for reporting only bad news.*

1. Imagine the types of events you would love to see happen. What headlines might you see? Your choices reflect the values you hold.
2. Write at least five headlines that you would like to see in your newspaper. Try to think of headlines that would be of primary significance to you personally, to your community and to the entire world.
3. Write the lead paragraph for one headline.
4. Discuss your choices with other students. Compare and contrast their headlines with your own. Be prepared to interpret your selections and explain why and how you made your choices.

Living Bill of Rights

Name: _____

Focus: General

Objective: *To analyze how the Bill of Rights affects our lives.*

Activity: *The U.S. Constitution and amendments form the framework for our government and way of life. Even after 200 years, the Constitution is alive and well. The relevancy of the Constitution is readily apparent in what's reported in the newspaper.*

1. Secure a copy of the U.S. Constitution and amendments. Most government textbooks include a copy.
2. Read the Preamble and first ten amendments (Bill of Rights). Examine the newspaper and find at least five examples of how the Bill of Rights affects our lives today; don't overlook any sections of the newspaper. Compare your responses with other students.
3. Write a brief article about how the Bill of Rights affects our lives. If possible, draw an editorial cartoon related to your article.
4. Our Constitution is continually being challenged. Identify one or more threats to our constitutional freedoms as indicated by issues reported in the newspaper.

Time Capsule

Name: _____

Focus: General

Objective: *To form a synthesis of the items that are representative of our contemporary culture.*

Activity: *Time capsules are frequently buried or placed in the cornerstone of buildings to give future generations an idea of what our culture was like and the things we considered to be important. Since the newspaper is a daily record of our lives and times, items from the newspaper are often included in time capsules.*

1. Assume that your community has decided to bury a time capsule to be opened 100 years in the future. In addition to some other items, the time capsule will include five items (articles, ads, editorials, etc.) from the newspaper.
2. As editor of your community newspaper, you have been asked to choose the five items to go into the time capsule.
3. Clip the five items and describe the criteria you used to make your decision. Compare your responses with other students. Would you change any of the items you selected after discussing your choices with other students?

Newspaper Evaluation

Name: _____

Focus: General

Objective: *To evaluate the quality of your community newspaper.*

Activity: *All newspapers serve essentially the same purpose. As with anything else, the quality of newspapers may differ significantly. Most newspapers continually try to improve and give their readers the best product possible.*

1. Assume that you have been assigned the task of evaluating your local newspaper.
2. Reflect on the purpose of newspapers. What criteria would you suggest for evaluating a newspaper? Compare and contrast your criteria with other students.
3. Using the criteria you've selected, evaluate your local newspaper. Be constructive in your criticisms (give examples when possible). You should be able to generate a series of suggestions for improving your community newspaper.

Newsworthy

Name: _____

Focus: News

Objective: *To distinguish the news value of certain events.*

Activity: *Because of the nature of their position, some people will always be in the news. The same can be said for events that are of national significance. However, there are criteria that can be applied to many news stories to determine why they were newsworthy enough to be included in the newspaper.*

1. Review the following criteria. An event is considered newsworthy if it involves one or more of the following: timeliness or immediacy, proximity or nearness, consequences, conflict, drama, oddity or unusualness and emotions.
2. Examine the news stories in one issue of your newspaper. To what degree do the stories relate to the above criteria? Develop a chart of criteria and news stories to illustrate your findings.
3. Over a longer period of time, find a news story that is a good example of each of the criteria.
4. News stories generally include the who, what, when, where, why and how (5 Ws and H) of a particular event. Using your imagination and the newsworthy criteria, create a short news story using as many of the criteria and the 5 Ws and H as you can.

Today's News

Name: _____

Focus: News

Objective: *To analyze the historical significance of today's news.*

Activity: *Today's news is tomorrow's history. The newspaper provides us with a chronicle of important daily events. In the future, some of the events will be considered important while others will be considered of little significance. The historians will decide.*

1. Assume that you are going to write a history book that will include sections on local, state and national events.
2. Examine your newspaper for a period of one week. Note the major local, state and national news events that are reported.
3. Determine what events, if any, you will likely include in each of the three sections of your book. Since space in your book will be limited, you must be selective. For each of your selections, write a brief explanation describing how you arrived at your decisions. Discuss your historically significant events with other students.

Coverage

Name: _____

Focus: News

Objective: *To compare and contrast the news coverage of certain events.*

Activity: *Although many news stories are written by wire services (AP, UPI), other stories of local, regional and state interest are written by your newspaper's reporters. The editors decide which stories to include in the newspaper.*

1. Locate newspapers of approximately the same size from several cities; obtain copies published on the same date. Compare the coverage each newspaper gave the same news story. How were the stories alike and different? How does their coverage differ from the newspaper printed where the event actually happened?

2. Examine at least one issue of your local newspaper. Categorize the news stories by location (local, state, national, international) and type of story.

3. Assume that you are a foreign correspondent assigned to cover major news events in the United States. Choose any foreign country you want to represent. Read and summarize the major news events over a two-week period. What events are most important or would be of most interest to your readers? If possible, compare news articles on the same event in different foreign papers. Does it make a difference which foreign paper or news service you represent? How might foreign correspondents slant the news? Why would they? Reverse the roles—assume that you are an American correspondent assigned to a foreign country.

Clarifying Concerns

Name: _____

Focus: News

Objective: *To clarify individual values and concerns from the newspaper.*

Activity: *The news section, as well as every other section of the newspaper, covers a variety of things that may concern us both individually and collectively.*

1. Read through several issues of your newspaper (examine all sections).
2. Clip three photos, graphics, stories, ads, or anything else from the newspaper that is of personal concern to you.
3. Share your concerns (clippings) with two other students. From the nine clippings, select three that are of most interest or concern to your group of three students.
4. Combine your group of three with another group of three students. Select a leader and, as a group, select the one concern of greatest interest to your group of six.
5. Write a news story about the concern identified by your group. Or: Write an editorial or letter to the editor about the concern; draw an editorial cartoon about it; create a display advertisement to communicate your group's concern.

Society's Problems

Name: _____

Focus: News

Objective: *To develop a solution for a current societal problem.*

Activity: *The news section of the newspaper provides us with a daily record of the problems and issues facing our society. The editors may offer their interpretation of the issues and their proposed solution on the editorial pages.*

1. Read the newspaper for a few days. Assume that the President of the United States is about to give the State of the Union address. Since much of the address will focus on current problems and issues, what do you believe the President might say?

2. Using your newspaper as the main source of information, write an editorial that includes the following:
   A. What is the issue or problem; what is the current situation (the real)?
   B. What would be the ideal situation regarding the issue or problem?
   C. What information have you gathered from your newspaper regarding the issue (both the present and ideal situation)? You may want to gather background information from other sources.
   D. Consider the differences between A (real) and B (ideal). State the problem as clearly and simply as possible.
   E. Identify as many possible solutions to the problem as you can. Make sure that you consider the positive and negative consequences of each solution.
   F. Describe what you believe would be the best solution.
   G. Can your solution be implemented? What resources would be necessary?
   H. How would you evaluate the success of your solution?

3. Read other students' editorials regarding a societal issue. Critique their editorials regarding A-H above.

Conflict Resolution

Name: _____

Focus: News

Objective: *To analyze types of conflict reported in the newspaper.*

Activity: *Many news stories report on conflicts that have arisen regarding events in our lives. The conflicts can be classified, at least in part, as individual vs. individual, individual vs. group, group vs. group, individual or group vs. society or society vs. society.*

1. Read your newspaper and find one example for at least three of the above conflict classifications.

2. Analyze two of your examples by using the following information and questions:
   A. Describe the conflict (main problem or question in the dispute).
   B. What classification (or classifications) is involved?
   C. Identify the positions or sides in the conflict.
   D. What caused the conflict?
   E. Evaluate your newspaper's presentation of the conflict. Are the views of both sides presented? Is there a slant or bias? If you're analyzing an editorial, does the writer consider both sides of the question before taking a position? If you're analyzing a cartoon, decide whether it illustrates a conflict (shows the positions of both sides) or comments on the conflict (shows support or criticism for one side).
   F. Is the conflict resolved in the newspaper's account? What was the outcome? Or what actions, if any, are being taken toward resolution of the problem? Which side do you think will pevail? Why?

3. Write an editorial or column analyzing the conflict. Make sure that you include your own opinions.

Cultural Awareness

Name: _____

Focus: News

Objective: *To infer cultural differences from the newspaper.*

Activity: *The newspaper frequently provides us with some insights on how people live in other countries. The insights can come from news stories, as well as from other sections of the newspaper.*

1. Over a period of time, collect pictures, articles and any other information from the newspaper about world cultures other than your own.
2. After analyzing the information, what inferences can you make about other cultures?
3. What similarities and differences from our own culture did you find? If possible, compare your responses with other students.
4. Assume that you are going to visit another country. Research the country you've selected and write a feature story about the country. The feature story could focus on one (religion, government, travel, etc.) or several aspects of the culture.
5. Collect any articles or other information from the newspaper that relate to the country you've selected.

2050

Name: _____

Focus: News

Objective: *To predict events that may appear in future newspapers.*

Activity: *It is impossible to know for sure what life will be like in the future or the events that will be reported in newspapers.*

1. Assume that you are the editor of your local newspaper in the year 2050. Using your knowledge of current events and your imagination, predict what you believe might be front page news in 2050. For your future front page, write at least five headlines for stories that might appear. Write a lead paragraph for two of the stories.
2. Compare your predictions with two other students. Note any similarities and differences in the predictions. Develop a classification system for the different predictions.

Voice of the People

Name: _____

Focus: **Editorials**

Objective: *To determine the writing styles of effective letters to the editor.*

Activity: *Most newspapers publish letters to the editor on a regular basis. The letters give readers an opportunity to voice their opinions on a variety of issues.*

1. Read the letters to the editor for a period of several days. Determine the following from your observations:
   A. Why are letters sent to the editor? What is the intent of the letter writers (complain, compliment, persuade, comment, etc.)?
   B. What, in your opinion, is the most effective writing style used in letters to the editor? How does this style of writing compare with other types of letters people might write? Select two effective letters to the editor. Describe why they are effective.
2. Write a letter to the editor on a topic of interest to you. You may even want to send it to your newspaper.
3. After researching the topics discussed in the letters to the editor chosen in exercise B above, determine whether the content of the letters is based on fact or fiction, myth or reality, emotion or logic. Using the examples you've discovered, present a rationale for your analysis.

Liberal and Conservative

Name: _____

Focus: Editorials

Objective: *To analyze the writing of newspaper columnists for liberal or conservative viewpoints.*

Activity: *The editorial pages include expressions of opinion and interpretations regarding a wide variety of topics. The opinions may come from newspaper staff members, syndicated columnists, cartoonists and readers. Expressions of opinion—"editorializing" —are reserved for the editorial pages and should not be evident in other sections of the newspaper.*

1. Read the editorial pages of your newspaper for one week. Note the syndicated columnists carried by your newspaper. Identify at least one liberal and one conservative columnist. Be able to distinguish between them and discuss what makes one a liberal and one a conservative.

2. Research the biographies of the liberal and conservative columnists you've identified. Write a short biographical sketch of the columnists. Look for background information that might have had an impact on the value structures of the columnists.

3. Read one column written by each of your columnists about the same issue or concern. Summarize what each columnist had to say about the issue. Analyze the columns and answer the following questions:
   A. In what ways did the columnists agree?
   B. In what ways did they disagree?
   C. State a preference for one of the columnists. State the reasons for your preference.
   D. Which columnist was more objective? Why?

4. Select an event or issue in history. How would the columnists have responded to the event and why? Write a column as you believe one of your columnists would have written it.

Editorial Values

Name: _____

Focus: Editorials

Objective: *To classify values expressed in the editorial pages.*

Activity: *The values that people have are expressed in the editorial pages of the newspaper. Editorial comments are reflections of beliefs, opinions and attitudes.*

1. Read the editorial section of your newspaper for several days. Be sure to observe, examine and analyze all the parts of this section—letters to the editor, editorials, editorial cartoons, etc. Be aware of the types of values that are represented in this section of the newspaper. Develop a system for classifying the values expressed—such as political, social, economic, religious, etc. Keep a log of values expressed over a five-day period. From your observations, what conclusions can you draw related to the purposes and functions of the editorial pages?

2. Examine the value categories and determine what bias or value structure is present in the editorial section. What values are most and least often expressed?

3. Select an editorial, letter to the editor or editorial cartoon and make a personal response to what you read or viewed. Be aware of your own personal values and how they affect your response.

4. With other students, select a letter to the editor that expresses an important problem or issue involving your community. Brainstorm as many ideas or solutions to the problem as possible. Be sure to consider the consequences of any particular solution. Assume that you or a member of your group is the editor of the newspaper. As editor, either write an editorial about the problem or write a letter back to the letter writer expressing your views on the topic and how the problem might be solved.

Dear Editor

Name: _____

Focus: Editorials

Objective: *To analyze issues and problems of concern to citizens.*

Activity: *Letters to the editor provide us with an excellent overview of the problems and issues that are of concern to people. Writing a letter to the editor takes time, so we can be reasonably sure that the issues mentioned are of real importance to the individual letter writers.*

1. Read the letters to the editor section of your newspaper for at least one week and respond to the following:
   A. What are people writing about?
   B. What topics are most frequently discussed? Make a frequency table to illustrate the major issues or concerns.
   C. Analyze the letters and identify statements of fact and opinion and information that is irrelevant to the topic or issue being discussed.
2. Select one of the most frequently discussed issues and conduct some research to find out more about the topic. Use a variety of techniques including interviews, past newspapers and library materials. Write a summary of your findings.
3. Using the knowledge you've gained from your research, write a position paper expressing your opinions or viewpoints about the topic. Revise your paper and write it in the form of a letter to the editor.

Cartooning

Name: _____

Focus: Editorials

Objective: *To design an editorial cartoon on a issue of interest.*

Activity: *Editorial cartoons may be local or nationally syndicated and generally use satire as a way to communicate a point of view regarding issues or events. Editorial cartoons remain one of the most popular features of any newspaper.*

1. Clip the editorial cartoons from the newspaper for a few days. Write a paragraph or two describing the "message" the cartoonist is trying to convey in each of the cartoons. Check your responses with other students or your teacher.
2. Research the issues that the cartoonists are trying to illustrate. What are the different sides to the issues? What issues are local or national in scope?
3. Select an issue that is of particular interest to you. Draw an editorial cartoon to reflect your opinion of the issue. Make sure that your cartoon reflects a single topic or issue and is as simple and clearly defined as possible. Describe what an editorial cartoon that takes the opposite view might look like.
4. Select an issue, problem or concern that you have about your school. Draw an editorial cartoon to illustrate the issue and how you feel about it. Post your cartoon on a bulletin board and determine if other students share your views.

Effective Cartoons

Name: _____

Focus: Editorials

Objective: *To evaluate editorial cartoons in terms of purpose and effectiveness.*

Activity: *Editorial cartoonists illustrate their views on a wide variety of topics. Their cartoons are designed to offer criticism, praise, interpretation or entertainment (or a combination).*

1. Collect editorial cartoons from a variety of newspapers. Determine the subjects of the cartoons and if the cartoonist was for, against or neutral toward the subject. Identify which cartoons were designed primarily to offer criticism, praise, interpretation or entertainment.
2. From the cartoons you've collected, analyze the similarities and differences used by different cartoonists to illustrate their editorial views.
3. Identify a cartoon that you believe is particularly effective. List the criteria you believe could be used to evaluate cartoons and their editorial effectiveness. Share your criteria with other students and see what they can add to your list.
4. Read the letters to the editors in your newspaper for a few days. Draw an editorial cartoon to illustrate the viewpoint expressed by a letter writer. Be sure to consider the criteria you identified in number 3.

Cartoon News Tag

Name: _____

Focus: Editorials

Objective: *To design editorial cartoons on current news events or issues.*

Activity: *Editorial cartoons can reflect past, present and even future issues or events. Most cartoons, however, offer an illustrated editorial view on a current issue or event in the news (news tag).*

1. Follow the major news events reported in your newspaper for a period of one week. Keep a file of the "happenings" related to at least one event or issue. At the end of the week, summarize the information you have collected regarding the event or issue you've selected.
2. Conduct some additional research related to your selection. Compile the information into working order and try to visualize how you might illustrate the issue or event in the form of an editorial cartoon.
3. Draw an editorial cartoon or series of cartoons to portray your event or issue. Share your cartoon with other students for their reactions and comments.
4. Assume that the event or issue will continue into the future. In a brief paragraph or two, describe what you predict future cartoons on the topic may look like or contain.

Analyzing Ads

Name: _____

Focus: **Advertisements**

Objective: *To analyze the basics of advertising and advertising appeals to consumers.*

Activity: *Advertising is essential to newspapers. Without advertising, newspapers could not afford to publish, businesses could not tell consumers about their products and services, and we would not know as much as we do about the price and availability of products.*

1. Good advertising gets the attention of the consumer through positive treatment of the product, shows people the advantages of the product, creates a need for the product, persuades people to buy the product and asks for action by the consumer.

2. Many ads are designed to appeal to different segments of our society. They may "target" only certain types of consumers. Examine the ads in your newspaper and identify at least one ad that is designed to appeal primarily to women, men, children, teenagers, senior citizens and people with high incomes.

3. Select any one of the ads you identified for activity 2. How could the ad be changed to appeal to one of the other groups?

4. Examine the ads that are included in different sections of the newspaper. What does the placement of the ads have to do with the products being advertised?

Evaluating Ads

Name: _____

Focus: **Advertisements**

Objective: *To evaluate the quality of newspaper advertisements.*

Activity: *Newspapers could not exist in their current form without advertising. Like anything else, advertisements differ in their quality and impact on the potential consumer.*

1. Assume that you're going to help judge a newspaper advertising contest. No specific rules have been given, and you're expected to establish your own criteria for evaluating the ads.

2. Clip any five display ads. (These are ads that contain artwork or design elements to attract reader interest. As opposed to classified ads—small "people-to-people" ads—display ads are the marketplace for goods and services offered by retail stores or national manufacturers.) Rank the ads according to the criteria you've established. Make sure you identify and explain the criteria.

3. As a continuation of number 2, and using the same criteria, collect what you consider to be five very poor ads. Justify your choices.

4. Write a letter to the newspaper's advertising director offering suggestions for improving the quality of the ads.

Cultural Artifacts

Name: _____

Focus: Advertisements

Objective: *To make inferences about our society from cultural artifacts.*

Activity: *An artifact is a manmade object that has been designed for a particular use. We have a better understanding of previous cultures and civilizations by the artifacts that have survived (buildings, art, sculptures, tools, etc.). Many of the artifacts representative of our way of life can be easily identified in newspaper advertisements.*

1. Examine the advertisements in one issue of your local newspaper (both display and classified).

2. Using your own criteria, select from the newspapers ads:
   A. Five artifacts that you believe are important and useful to most citizens.
   B. Five artifacts that are related to work in one form or another.
   C. Five artifacts that relate to our use of leisure time.
   D. Three artifacts that are unusual or of limited value and are not used by most people.
   E. Three artifacts that are likely to be long-lasting.

3. Reflect on your responses to the above activity. Assume that our civilization has come to an end but our artifacts remain. Write a column or feature story about what future civilizations would infer from the artifacts left behind.

Persuasion

Name: _____

Focus: Advertisements

Objective: *To analyze the use of techniques of persuasion in newspaper advertisements.*

Activity: *Persuasive techniques are used by advertisers to help convince people to buy their products. Both national and local retail ads are designed to make the products as appealing as possible.*

1. Examine the retail (not classified) ads in one or more issues of your newspaper.
2. Locate an example of the following persuasive techniques:
   A. Testimonial: A picture and/or statement from a famous living person endorsing the advertised product.
   B. Transfer: Associating something we view with pride with a product (U.S. flag, Statue of Liberty, Abraham Lincoln).
   C. Glittering Generality: General positive statements without specifics (it's good for you, taste-tested, etc.).
   D. Plain Folks or Elitism: Techniques that are designed to appeal to the common person or to those with high economic status.
   E. Bandwagon: Attempts to persuade by stressing the popularity of the product.
3. Select a product of interest to you and one you'd like to advertise. Design an ad that uses at least two of the above techniques. If you prefer, select an ad from your newspaper and make it more appealing by using one or more of the techniques of persuasion.
4. Write a brief letter to the editor describing your views regarding the use of persuasive techniques in advertising. Do you, for instance, believe that people can be easily persuaded to purchase a product?

New, Old and Future Products

Name: _____

Focus: Advertisements

Objective: *To contrast new and old products and services and predict future products and services.*

Activity: *The current and changing nature of our society can be identified partly by the goods and services that are available to us. Changes in goods and services are reflective of our progress.*

1. Examine the display and classified ads in your newspaper. Identify at least 10 goods (products) or services that are currently available but were probably not available 20 to 50 years ago. Clip your choices and attach them to a sheet of paper. What can you infer about the changes in goods and services? In your opinion, to what degree are the changes positive or negative?

2. Assume that you are reading your newspaper in the year 2000. Predict what you believe might be five goods and five services advertised in the newspaper that are not currently available.

3. Read other students' responses to this activity. Analyze their predictions, and your own, regarding which of the predicted goods and services are most or least likely to come true. Be prepared to explain your interpretations.

My Product or Service

Name: _____

Focus: Advertisements

Objective: *To design a newspaper ad for a newly created product or service.*

Activity: *New goods and services are continually being advertised in the newspaper. They may include a new food product, a new restaurant or a new service for consumers.*

1. Using your imagination, think of a new product or service that you believe consumers might buy. What you create need not have much practical value.
2. Assume that your product or service will be available to consumers in the near future.
3. Design a display ad for your product or service. Examine newspaper display ads for some effective examples that may give you some help in designing your ad. Keep in mind the basics of newspaper ads and the forms of persuasion that can be used. You may clip pictures and illustrations from actual ads to use with your ad.
4. Examine the ads designed by other students. How are they similar and different from your ad? What ads were most effective? Why?

Interdependence

Name: _____

Focus: Advertisements

Objective: *To analyze the interdependent nature of our society.*

Activity: *None of our communities can produce all the goods that we consume. We rely on other states, regions and countries to produce much of what we need. The interdependent nature of our world is revealed in newspaper advertisements.*

1. Examine the advertisements (display and classified) in several issues of your newspaper.
2. Identify as many examples as you can of products that are produced or manufactured in other regions, states or countries.
3. Develop a classification system for the products you have identified. Identify the products that are luxuries or necessities and the products for which there is no American competition.
4. Write an editorial or newspaper column about the interdependent nature of our society.

Luxuries/Necessities

Name: _____

Focus: Advertisements

Objective: *To analyze our life styles and the goods and services we consume.*

Activity: *There is likely to be a significant difference between what we want and what we actually need. Advertisers, in an attempt to sell their products, often try to convince us that our wants are actually things that we need.*

1. Examine the display ads in one or more issues of your newspaper.
2. Clip and attach to a sheet of paper five pictures of products that you believe are necessities and five that are luxuries.
3. Repeat the above activity, but locate three services that you believe may be necessities and three that are luxuries.
4. In a paragraph or two, describe the criteria you chose to determine what are luxuries and necessities. If possible, compare your responses to activities 2, 3 and 4 with other students. How are their responses similar and different from your own?
5. Select any one product or service that most people would label as a luxury. If you were going to advertise the product or service and attempt to convince consumers that they really need to buy it, what would you include in your ad?
6. Write a brief editorial on the inferences about our life styles that are evidenced by newspaper advertisements.

Entertainment Values

Name: _____

Focus: Entertainment

Objective: *To examine forms of entertainment valued by people in our society.*

Activity: *All of us, in one way or another, want to be entertained. We appreciate the importance of leisure time activities and the role that leisure plays in our lives.*

1. Identify all forms of entertainment that you can find from one issue of your newspaper; don't overlook the classified ads.
2. List the costs associated with different forms of entertainment.
3. Read the TV section of your newspaper and indicate your program choices for a few days. Compare your choices with the Nielsen ratings that are reported in your newspaper.
4. Write an editorial regarding your views of entertainment in your community (positives, negatives, needed changes). If possible, examine the forms of entertainment found in communities similar in size to your own.

Entertainment Changes

Name: _____

Focus: Entertainment

Objective: *To evaluate changes in forms of entertainment that have taken place in our society.*

Activity: *As our society changes, so do our forms of entertainment—from the music we enjoy, to the movies and television shows we watch. Many changes are the result of improved technology. This activity assumes that you will have access to past newspapers (from 5, 10, 15 years ago).*

1. Review, in old newspapers, articles and advertisements relating to entertainment offerings.
2. What changes can you identify from past and present entertainment possibilities? Design a chart to illustrate these changes.
3. What changes are the result of advances in technology?
4. Interview some adults regarding their assessments of changes in forms of entertainment.
5. Write an editorial or letter to the editor regarding your views about entertainment changes in your community. Include your prediction of future changes.

Culture Clues

Name: _____

Focus: Entertainment

Objective: *To evaluate the forms of culture in our communities.*

Activity: *Culture is a concept that has a variety of meanings to different people.*

1. Describe what culture means to you. Be sure to identify the range of social and artistic expressions normally associated with culture.
2. Examine the newspaper and list the specific examples of culture that you can find. In particular, clip any photos or illustrations that depict cultural events.
3. If possible, examine the newspapers from other communities (same size, smaller, larger) and compare and contrast the forms of culture that you can identify.
4. Describe the types of cultural activities that are part of your life. Compare your response with other students.
5. Imagine a cultural event that you would like to plan for your friends. Prepare an invitation for your event. Be sure and fully describe what your friends can expect when they attend.
6. Write an editorial about culture in your community. Your editorial should focus on your evaluation of culture in your community. Describe any changes you would like to see.

Critic

Name: _____

Focus: Entertainment

Objective: *To criticize one or more specific forms of entertainment.*

Activity: *A critic is someone who makes judgments regarding the entertainment value of a particular event or program. Articles that critics write for newspapers are called reviews.*

1. Read the entertainment reviews (books, TV, movies, concerts, etc.) in your newspaper to acquaint yourself with the way they are written.
2. Reflect on what qualifications you believe a person should have to write critical reviews for the newspaper. Write a help wanted ad for an entertainment critic. Identify the qualifications and experiences the person should possess.
3. Read one or more reviews of a form of entertainment that you have witnessed or attended. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the reviewer.
4. Using any form of entertainment that you wish, write a review of the event or program. Be prepared to discuss what you've written and the criteria you have used to make your decision.

Role of Sports

Name: _____

Focus: Entertainment

Objective: *To evaluate the role that sports play in our lives.*

Activity: *Most people enjoy watching or participating in sports activities of one type or another. One look at the newspaper and the fact that newspapers devote an entire section to sports reporting indicates the importance of sports to our society.*

1. Read the sports section of your local newspaper for several days.
2. What kinds or types of sports activities are reported? Which are amateur and which are professional?
3. What activities occur in different countries? If possible, examine sports sections from different seasons of the year.
4. What societal problems have surfaced in the sports section?
5. What can you assume or infer about our society from reading the sports section?
6. Given what you've studied so far, what changes would you suggest regarding the sports section of your newspaper?
7. Given the current status of sports in our society, what changes in sports would you predict will happen in the future?
8. Assume that you've been appointed commissioner of all U.S. professional sports. Your decisions will affect both the sports activities and the reporting of the activities in the newspaper. Write a newspaper column expressing your views about sports in our society. Include any recommended changes you would suggest to improve sports and sports reporting. Be prepared to explain your recommendations.

Hobbies/Recreation/Travel

Name: _____

Focus: Entertainment

Objective: *To generalize about the hobbies, recreation and travel activities of citizens.*

Activity: *Most citizens have hobby or recreational interests and enjoy traveling. The newspaper provides us with a good overview of the range of leisure time activities that are available to us.*

1. Examine one or more copies of your newspaper; read all sections, including the classified ads. Identify the different types of hobbies and recreational options that are available to you. Create some classification system that you could use for the activities you have identified.

2. If possible, determine what the different hobbies and forms of recreation would cost; calculate the start-up costs and the costs associated with pursuing the hobby on an annual basis. (For example, start-up costs of skiing might include the purchase of skis and boots; annual costs might include travel to ski areas, lodging, lift fees, etc.)

3. Using the travel ads, plan a vacation trip to a place or places you would like to visit. Determine the predicted cost of the vacation. As a complementary activity, identify some places you would not want to visit.

4. Reflecting on your responses to the above activities, what generalized statements or inferences can you make about people and their hobbies, recreation and travel values? Use your generalized statements and write a brief editorial or newspaper column. In addition, predict what changes you believe may come about in the future.

Cultural Reflections

Name: _____

Focus: Comics

Objective: *To analyze comic strips as reflections of culture.*

Activity: *To a large extent the comic strips are a reflection of our culture. Comic strip writers frequently use everyday events and contemporary affairs as the basis for their stories. Many comic strips are uniquely American and would not be funny or make much sense to someone from another country.*

1. Assume that you are to select at least five comic strips for a comic strip time capsule. The comic strips should give people in the future an idea of what our culture is like. Briefly describe how you made your decisions.

2. Some of our comic strips might or might not be popular with readers in another country. Read your newspaper's comic strips and select five that you believe would be popular to foreign readers and five you believe would not be popular. Assume that the people can read English. Describe the criteria you used to make your decisions. Discuss your criteria and the decisions you made with other students. Are the comic strips reflections of culture?

Alike and Different

Name: _____

Focus: Comics

Objective: *To compare and contrast comic strip similarities and differences.*

Activity: *Comic strips, like all other sections of the newspaper, appeal to a wide range of individuals. To a large measure, their appeal comes from the fact that although they share certain similarities they are also quite different.*

1. Make a list of what comes to mind when you think of comic strips.
2. Examine the comic strips in your newspaper for one week. List at least five similarities and five differences that you have found. For example, some comics are funny while others are serious.
3. Compare your responses to number 2 with your classmates. Note any similarities and differences between their responses and yours. Combine your responses with theirs. If possible, compare your newspaper's comics with those of another newspaper. Add any new similarities and differences that you discover.
4. Determine if there is a way to classify the similarities and differences that you found. Are there categories of similarities and categories of differences?
5. Write a brief newspaper article comparing and contrasting comic strip similarities and differences. Include your response to number 2 in your article.

Scrambled

Name: _____

Focus: Comics

Objective: *To design a new comic strip from existing comic strip characters, settings and stories.*

Activity: *Newspaper comic strips include a wide variety of characters, settings and stories. Most comics have a regular set of characters, a usual setting and a general story theme. Some interesting and entertaining comic strips can be designed by mixing characters, settings and stories.*

1. Read your newspaper's comic strips for a few days. Pay particular attention to the different characters, settings and story themes.
2. Design a new comic strip by using different components or elements from several different comics published by your newspaper. Your comic strip should include the following:
   A. Four main characters. List and describe each character.
   B. A setting. Describe where the comic strip will take place.
   C. The story idea. Describe the general theme or story idea for the comic strip.
   D. A story example. In a paragraph or two, give an example of one comic strip story. If possible, draw the comic strip to illustrate your use of the story idea, characters and setting.

Characters

Name: _____

Focus: Comics

Objective: *To clarify the traits of comic strip characters.*

Activity: *Like any other story form, a comic strip will include a number of main and supporting characters. Each character is important to the overall theme of the comic strip and its success.*

1. Select five of your favorite comic strip characters. In a paragraph for each, describe the character as completely as you can. Make sure to include any adjectives that you believe are descriptive of the characters.
2. Assume that you are a newspaper reporter assigned to interview two comic strip characters. Select any two characters, and write what you believe their answers might be to your interview questions.
3. Identify your favorite comic strip character. Design an advertising campaign to "sell" your character to other students. Your campaign should include a newspaper ad for your character.

Comic Changes

Name: _____

Focus: Comics

Objective: *To analyze past, present and future changes in newspaper comic strips.*

Activity: *Like most everything else, comic strips tend to change with the passage of time. Comic strips come and go, and only a very few maintain their popularity for very long. It is interesting to compare the present comic strips in your newspaper with those of the past.*

1. Secure a copy of your newspaper from 10, 20 or 30 years ago. Compare the comic strips from your current newspaper to newspapers from the past. Identify the differences in the comic strips. Look at artwork, characters, setting, etc.
2. Read the comic strips from the past and present and note any changes in comic strip story lines. What changes can be attributed to scientific progress?
3. Write a brief feature story on changes in comic strips. Include in your story the changes that you believe are positive and those, if any, that you think are negative. Predict any changes you believe are likely to take place in the future.

Aliens

Name: _____

Focus: Comics

Objective: *To develop hypotheses about life on planet Earth.*

Activity: *Comic strips are not expected to reflect accurately what our lives are like. The characters, settings and stories may or may not be anything like "life on earth."*

1. Assume that you are part of a space exploration team from a distant planet. Your mission is to report back to your superiors on life in America. You have landed on an isolated desert in the Southwest. Unfortunately, your spaceship developed problems immediately upon landing—forcing you to return to your planet. The only source of information about our lives that you were able to find was a page of newspaper comic strips. The technology available permits you to read the comic strips. Using the comics in your local newspaper as your sole source of information, identify at least 10 hypotheses about life on earth that aliens might come up with from reading the comics.
2. Compare your hypotheses with other students. To what degree are the hypotheses correct or incorrect?

Popularity Profile

Name: _____

Focus: Comics

Objective: *To analyze the popularity of newspaper comic strips*

Activity: *The majority of newspaper readers read at least some of the comic strips. As a form of entertainment, comic strips have maintained a very high degree of popularity.*

1. Reflect on the comic strips. Identify at least five reasons (hypotheses) why you believe comic strips are so popular. Compare your hypotheses with other students. Survey at least five adults to determine if they agree with your reasons. Develop a chart or table to report your results. In addition, survey the adults to determine if they read the comics and, if so, what are their most and least favorite comic strips.
2. Develop a popularity poll of comic strip characters. Ask some of your classmates to identify their favorite comic characters. Have them describe or explain their choices.
3. Assume that your newspaper has decided to discontinue publishing comic strips. Write two letters to the editor. In one letter criticize the newspaper's decision; in the other letter, praise it. Your analysis of the popularity (or lack of popularity) of newspaper comic strips should be evident in your two letters.

Picture That

Name: _____

Focus: Specials

Objective: *To create a story from different newspaper photos.*

Activity: *Photos and other illustrations are extremely important to the overall effect of newspapers. Many stories would not be interesting or meaningful to us if they did not have pictures accompanying them.*

1. Examine your newspaper and find at least three stories with photos. Describe how the photos contribute to the news story. Then find two stories without photos. How would photos have contributed to these stories?

2. Examine the pictures printed in your newspaper for a period of one week. Clip three pictures that you believe are well done and three pictures that you believe are not very good. Justify your choices and list the criteria that you used to make your decision. See if you can find any pictures that you believe are in poor taste and should not have been printed.

3. Individually, or with a partner, clip five totally unrelated photos from the newspaper. The photos should not be on the same subject. If possible, avoid photos of famous individuals and important events. Write a short story using the five photos: First, determine the order of your five photos. Next, write at least two sentences for each photo to use in your story. Write a headline for your five-photo story. Exchange your story with other students. Clip an additional photo from the newspaper and ask other students how they would incorporate it into the five-photo story already developed.

Asking for Advice

Name: _____

Focus: Specials

Objective: *To analyze the purpose, questions and answers of advice columns.*

Activity: *Virtually every newspaper of any size publishes one or more personal advice columns. The columnists respond to questions or comments of a personal nature that have been sent to them by readers. The columns remain one of the most popular items published by newspapers.*

1. Read the personal advice column in your newspaper for a couple of weeks. Classify the types of personal problems that are printed. In your opinion, are the problems representative of ones that most people face?
2. What can you conclude about our personal problems by reading the advice columns?
3. Identify the personal problem or type of advice a reader is requesting in one advice column. Without reading the columnist's advice, write your own response to the reader's comment or question. Compare your response to what actually appeared in the newspaper.
4. Select a famous figure from history or a character from literature that you have studied. Reflecting on the problems that they faced, write a letter asking for advice. In addition, write a response that you believe a columnist might have given.
5. Write a letter to the editor from an advice columnist. The letter should state how personal advice columns serve the reader and why they are a worthwhile component of newspapers.

Our Society

Name: _____

Focus: _____ **Specials** _____

Objective: *To develop generalizations about society.*

Activity: *Most newspapers report on social events that have or will take place in your community. The events may be reported every day or may be reported only once each week. The society page may be titled "modern living," "family" or some other name. Whatever the title, the society page describes many of the social events in the life of the community. The events may involve a great many people or only a few. They reflect at least some of the social values of the community.*

1. Read the society page from at least two copies of your newspaper.
2. Write a series of general statements about the social values that are evidenced by the society page.
3. Who do you believe is likely to read this section of the newspaper? In your opinion, what is the function and value of the society page? To what extent does the society page reflect our customs and traditions?
4. If possible, read the society page from past newspapers (10, 20, 30 years ago). What changes can you find in comparison with your present newspaper?

Expert

Name: _____

Focus: Specials

Objective: *To apply expertise to a particular topic.*

Activity: *An expert is a person who has a special skill or knowledge of some particular subject. The area of knowledge may be very broad (sports) or specialized (soccer). Most people can become an expert or authority in at least one subject and can share their expertise with others through feature stories.*

1. Select one subject or topic that is of interest to you. Your task is to become an expert on what you've selected. You will probably need to do some research on your choice.
2. Read several feature stories in your newspaper to acquaint yourself with how they are written. Assume that you are going to write a series of three feature stories on your topic. What will be the focus of the three features? How will they be organized? Write a headline for each feature.
3. Write a short feature article on one of the focus areas you've selected. Remember that you are trying to create an interest in your topic. If possible, develop an illustration or picture related to your feature. Exchange your feature story with other students.

Feature That

Name: _____

Focus: _____ **Specials** _____

Objective: *To interpret the significance of feature stories.*

Activity: *When we think of newspapers we are most likely to think of the articles that report the news events (hard news) of the day. The newspaper includes numerous other articles that may discuss high interest topics such as travel, holidays, human interest, entertainment, history and contemporary life. Articles of interest that may or may not relate to a news story are called feature stories. Feature stories, unlike news stories, tend to use informal or colorful language, opinions, and are generally written in an essay style.*

1. Read the feature stories in your newspaper for a few days to acquaint yourself with the way they are written. Note the subjects of the different feature stories.
2. Think of at least five subjects (people, places, things) that you believe would make interesting feature stories.
3. Write a feature story using a topic of interest to you. Exchange your feature story with other students.
4. Some feature articles relate to news stories (news tag). Identify at least two news articles of interest to you. List the headlines from the stories and identify at least three feature stories that could be written about something in each article. If the features would involve an individual, think of several interview questions you might ask in your feature story.
5. In your opinion, what role do feature stories play regarding the overall effect of newspapers?

Business Changes

Name: _____

Focus: Specials

Objective: *To compare and contrast past and present business sections and predict future changes.*

Activity: *The business section of the newspaper provides us with a written record of business activities over a fairly short period of time. It gives us a historical frame of reference by which we can determine past changes and trends that may affect us in the future.*

1. Secure a copy of your newspaper's business section from 10, 20 or more years ago. Read the articles and determine what business issues were reported then that are no longer of interest or concern. What issues are still relevant?

2. Compare the business section of your current newspaper with your newspaper of the past. Compare how issues were covered or presented in the two time periods. What things are really different? What things haven't changed? What changes would you like to see?

3. Predict how the business section may look in another 10, 20 or more years. What issues might be covered and how might coverage change from the present? Write three headlines that you believe might be in a future business section.

That's Business

Name: _____

Focus: Specials

Objective: *To analyze the significance of newspaper business sections.*

Activity: *Almost every newspaper includes a business section sometime during the week. The section provides a wide range of specialized information on a number of business-related topics.*

1. Locate the business section of your newspaper. Examine the section and list the types of information that are provided for the reader. What reporting forms are used to present information?

2. Reflect on the importance of the information provided in the business section. Write a brief article on why the business news is important. Consider which people are most likely to read the business section. Why should all citizens be interested in the business section of the newspaper?

3. Read both the business and general news section of your newspaper. List the headlines of all stories that relate to business. Summarize the main idea of each story in a short paragraph. Describe what significance the story has for the country in general and your community in particular.

Appendix A

Newspapers in Education and Higher Levels of Thinking

Behaviors Related to Using the Newspaper to Teach Higher Levels of Thinking	Additional Higher Level Thinking Skills (no particular order)
applying	cause and effect
solving	making analogies
experimenting	clarifying values
relating	observing
differentiating	fact and opinion
classifying	similarities and differences
arranging	inferences
grouping	assumptions
interpreting	solving problems
organizing	clarifying issues
categorizing	collecting/organizing data
comparing	ambiguities
contrasting	relevant/irrelevant
distinguishing	reliability/validity
explaining	contradictions
synthesizing	research
analyzing	arguments
planning	bias
inferring	sources
sequencing	frame of reference
designing	persuasion
hypothesizing	accuracy/inaccuracy
translating	questioning
composing	alternatives/consequences
extrapolating	main ideas
constructing	fluency
generalizing	flexibility
imagining	elaboration
speculating	
evaluating	
forecasting	
predicting	
criticizing	
judging	

There is an obvious relationship between the two lists. Most of the behaviors are actually higher level skills. The additional higher level thinking skills are only of value when connected with a desired behavior. For example, cause and effect as a skill is made explicit when used with behaviors like analyzing, differentiating, explaining or inferring.

Appendix B

Newspaper in Education
Student Contract

Beginning date _____ **Name** _____

Completion date _____ **Subject** _____

Proposed Credit _____

Describe your proposed project	**Teacher comments**
What are your objectives?	**Teacher comments**
How will your project be evaluated?	**Teacher comments**

_____ _____

Student signature **Teacher signature**

Use this form to modify an existing activity or to propose a totally new activity/project